

NMCI (AFCEA)**“2004 NMCI INDUSTRY SYMPOSIUM”****22 JUN 2004**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I ADDRESS YOU TODAY AS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS EXPERIENCED NMCI FROM THREE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. FIRST, I'M A USER: A CUSTOMER, IF YOU WILL. THAT IS MY PRIMARY REASON FOR BEING HERE TODAY. ABOUT FIVE MONTHS AGO, MY SEAT WAS THE FIRST AT THE MARINE CORPS COMBAT DEVELOPMENT COMMAND TO BE CUT OVER TO NMCI. I'VE BEEN USING IT ALMOST EVERY DAY SINCE.

SECOND, AS A MEMBER OF THE MARINE CORPS REQUIREMENTS OVERSIGHT COUNCIL (MROC) I'VE WITNESSED THE IMPACT AS OUR SERVICE MIGRATED FROM OUR MARINE CORPS ENTERPRISE NETWORK (MCEN) TO NMCI.

THIRD, I'M ALSO IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS NMCI FROM A COMMANDERS PERSPECTIVE. AS A COMMANDING GENERAL, I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NMCI THROUGHOUT THE COMBAT DEVELOPMENT COMMAND; AND TO THE RESIDENT TENANT COMMANDS AT QUANTICO. IT'S A SUBJECT THAT RECEIVES A GREAT DEAL OF MY PERSONAL ATTENTION. WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN A

SERIES OF COMPLEX NEW BUSINESS PRACTICES WITHIN THE MARINE CORPS. FOUR OF THEM HAVE HAD DIRECT IMPACT ON THE COMBAT DEVELOPMENT COMMAND AND QUANTICO WRIT LARGE: 1) THE PRIVATIZATION OF OUR BASE HOUSING INTO A PUBLIC/PRIVATE VENTURE; 2)THE CONTRACTING OUT OF ALL OF OUR MESS HALLS; 3)THE INCLUSION OF A MORE EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION AND COMMENSURATE CONTRACTS FOR BASE FACILITIES SERVICES; AND 4) NMCI. THIS HAS BEEN AN EXTRAORDINARY TIME FOR US. NEVER BEFORE HAVE SO MANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES BEEN IMPLEMENTED ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY. BECAUSE I HAD TO BE INVOLVED IN ALL THESE CHANGES, I'VE

DEVELOPED WHAT I CONSIDER TO BE A REALISTIC PICTURE OF THE OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE NMCI PROGRAM, AS WELL AS THE BUSINESS PROCESSES ASSOCIATED WITH ITS IMPLEMENTATION. SO, TODAY, I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU ED HANLON'S PICTURE OF NMCI. WE CAN TALK ABOUT MESS HALLS ANOTHER DAY!

FIRST, I WANT TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION, "WHY NMCI?" WHAT ADVANTAGES DOES IT BRING US? CERTAINLY, WE'RE ALL AWARE OF THE TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS INHERENT IN SUCH A PROGRAM:

- TECHNOLOGY "RE-FRESH" CAPABILITY,
- COMPATIBLE AND INTEROPERABLE SYSTEMS,

- AN INTEGRATED NETWORK, AND OF COURSE,
- MANPOWER EFFICIENCIES.

THOSE ARE LAUDABLE GOALS. BUT WHAT'S THE REAL IMPACT TO THE ORGANIZATION OF ACHIEVING THESE OBJECTIVES? I CAN BEST ANSWER THAT QUESTION WITH SOMETHING I PICKED UP IN THIS MONTH'S EDITION OF THE AFCEA JOURNAL, *SIGNAL*. THE COVER ARTICLE CONTAINS A QUOTE BY MR. GORDAN ENGLAND, WHO IS KNOWN TO SOME AS THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, BUT TO THOSE WHO WEAR MY UNIFORM AS THE "SECRETARY OF THE MARINE CORPS." THE SECRETARY USED A BUSINESS ANALOGY TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT OF NMCI, SAYING, "IT'S HOW YOU MAKE THE BACK SHOP MORE

EFFICIENT SO THAT WE CAN PUT MORE FIGHT IN THE FRONT END.” MOST OF YOU HEARD THE SECRETARY THIS MORNING WHEN HE SAID, “I BELIEVE IN AND SUPPORT THIS PROGRAM! IT FOCUSES EXACTLY WHERE NEEDED--WARFIGHTING.”

NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT WOULD BE VERY HARD TO IMPROVE UPON HIS BREAKFAST REMARKS. IN THE MARINE CORPS WE BELIEVE, AS PART OF OUR CONCEPT OF EXPEDITIONARY MANEUVER WARFARE, IN CENTRALIZED PLANNING AND DECENTRALIZED EXECUTION. CENTERPIECE TO THAT PHILOSOPHY IS “COMMANDERS INTENT” AND THIS MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE ALL HEARD “COMMANDERS

INTENT!" IT IS EVERYONE'S HOPE THAT NMCI, ULTIMATELY, WILL IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF OUR NATION'S NAVAL SERVICES TO UNDERTAKE OUR WARFIGHTING MISSION. "HOPE" THOUGH IS NOT A VIABLE COURSE OF ACTION AND WHETHER "HOPE" CAN BE TRANSLATED INTO FACT IS THE CHALLENGE AT HAND. AS THE COMBAT DEVELOPER OF THE MARINE CORPS, MY MAIN PURPOSE IN LIFE IS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE WARFIGHTING CAPABILITY THAT WE PROVIDE FOR OUR MARINES WHO ARE DEPLOYED IN COMBAT ZONES TODAY, AND FOR THOSE WHO WILL FIGHT OUR FUTURE WARS. THE SECRETARY'S WORDS REALLY HIT HOME WITH ME, BECAUSE THEY ACCURATELY CAPTURE THE BIG

PICTURE IN EXPLAINING WHAT, EXACTLY, WE'RE TRYING TO ACHIEVE THROUGH NMCI. AND ABOVE ALL, THOSE WORDS EXPRESS QUITE CLEARLY THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING IT RIGHT. PUT ANOTHER WAY, SECRETARY ENGLAND ESTABLISHED WHERE THE BAR OF SUCCESS OUGHT TO BE PLACED. NOW WE NEED TO SEE IF WE CAN CLEAR THAT BAR.

HERE ARE THE BIG QUESTIONS AS I SEE THEM:

- HOW ARE WE DOING? IS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NMCI MEETING OUR EXPECTATIONS?
- ARE WE BETTER OFF NOW THAN WE WERE A YEAR AGO? AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...

- WHEN NMCI IS FULLY OPERATIONAL, WILL WE GARNER ALL OF THE ADDITIONAL CAPABILITY WE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

LET ME GIVE YOU MY ASSESSMENT ON WHERE WE ARE VIS-A-VIS THESE QUESTIONS.

WE ALL ACKNOWLEDGE THE AMBITIOUS GOALS OF NMCI. AS AN INFORMATION NETWORK, IT'S SECOND ONLY TO THE INTERNET ITSELF IN SCALE. BY ANY MEASURE, THIS PROJECT IS AN ENORMOUS UNDERTAKING.

WE ALSO HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NMCI IS A BUSINESS PROCESS,

AND IT INVOLVES MANY BUSINESS ISSUES AND PRACTICES. THAT'S THE NATURE OF THE BEAST. AND LIKE ANY BUSINESS UNDERTAKING, THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A PROCESS. ON A CONTINUUM OF THE POSSIBILITIES, WE MIGHT FIND, AT THE LOW END, FOR EXAMPLE, A SCHEME TO SIMPLY ESTABLISH DEPARTMENT-WIDE STANDARDS AND COMPEL COMPLIANCE. AT THE HIGH END OF THIS CONTINUUM, WE FIND THE NOTION OF ESTABLISHING AN ENORMOUS, DEPARTMENT-WIDE CONTRACT. ANY APPROACH WOULD COME WITH ITS OWN UNIQUE ADVANTAGES, AS WELL AS CHALLENGES. WE WENT FOR THE HIGH END, AND INTUITIVELY, I BELIEVE THAT THIS LEADS TO THE

BIGGEST POTENTIAL PAYOFF. BUT THERE IS ALWAYS A BALANCE BETWEEN RISK AND PAYOFF, NOT JUST ON THE BATTLEFIELD, BUT IN THE BUSINESS WORLD, AS WELL. MAKING THE DECISION FOR THE HIGH PAYOFF WAS EASY. THE HARD PART WAS DEALING WITH THE RAMIFICATIONS OF HIGH RISK. THAT IS WHERE WE ARE TODAY.

EVERYONE RECOGNIZES THE ADVANTAGES INHERENT IN COMMONALITY, COMPATIBILITY, AND INTEGRATION. IN THE JOINT OPERATIONAL AND TACTICAL WORLD OF COMMAND AND CONTROL AND IN THE OTHER ASPECTS OF C4ISR, WE ARE DEALING WITH EXACTLY THE SAME CHALLENGES: HOW DO WE

ENSURE COMMONALITY, COMPATIBILITY, AND INTEGRATION WITHIN THE JOINT FORCE. AS I HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND OVER THE THREE YEARS OF MY ASSIGNMENT TO MCCDC, THIS IS HARD STUFF! IN THE MARINE CORPS LOOKING AT NMCI A YEAR AGO MANY SAID, “NOW, WAIT A MINUTE! WE ALREADY HAVE THOSE FEATURES IN THE MARINE CORPS ENTERPRISE NETWORK. WHY DISMANTLE A FULLY FUNCTIONAL AND DEPENDABLE SYSTEM?” AND THAT’S A TRUE STATEMENT AND A GOOD QUESTION. OUR NETWORK HAD A REPUTATION FOR SECURE, EFFECTIVE, AND RESPONSIVE SERVICE. IT WAS WORKING WELL FOR US. BUT, WE ALSO RECOGNIZED THAT NMCI WAS A TRANSFORMATIONAL EFFORT.

AND IT GOES BACK TO MY EARLIER COMMENT ON HIGH PAYOFF AND WHY WE FELT THE GOAL WAS A NOBLE ONE. THIS HIGH-END APPROACH HOLDS THE PROMISE OF DELIVERING THE KIND OF INCREASED CAPABILITY THAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR IN OUR SUPPORTING ESTABLISHMENT, AS A MEANS OF INCREASING THE RAW COMBAT POWER WE CAN DELIVER AGAINST THE ENEMY AT THE POINT OF OUR SPEAR. PUT ANOTHER WAY, OUR BASES AND STATIONS AND LOGISTICS DEPOTS FORM THE FOUNDATION AS THE FIFTH ELEMENT OF OUR MARINE AIR GROUND TASK FORCES. THIS IS THE MODEL BY WHICH WE, AS MARINES, PROJECT COMBAT POWER. WE FELT THAT IT WAS WORTH THE EFFORT TO

MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF OUR FIFTH ELEMENT
VIA REACH BACK AND A STATE-OF-THE-ART
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM FROM FOXHOLE
TO WAREHOUSE. SO, NMCI FITS NEATLY INTO OUR
OVERALL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS. WE'RE
COMMITTED TO IT AS A CRITICAL ENABLER OF OUR
FUTURE MARINE AIR-GROUND TASK FORCES.

LET ME SHARE WITH YOU MY OWN PERSONAL
OBSERVATIONS ON OUR PROGRESS. I'LL BE FRANK:
IT'S NOT GOING AS SMOOTHLY AS WE'D HOPED AND
EXPECTED. THERE ARE SEVERAL POINTS OF
FRICTION THAT ARE SLOWING DOWN OUR
PROGRESS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS THE QUESTION

OF AVAILABILITY OF NETWORK CIRCUITS. WHEN THESE CIRCUITS AREN'T AVAILABLE, SITES CAN'T ACCOMPLISH CUTOVER TO NMCI. RIGHT NOW, TRANSITION OF A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF OUR OPERATING FORCES IS BEING DELAYED AS THEY AWAIT DELIVERY OF NETWORK CIRCUITS. THAT MAKES FOR A MAJOR SLOW-DOWN IN SEAT DELIVERY. THAT AFFECTS OUR INTERFACE BETWEEN WARFIGHTER AND SUPPORTING ESTABLISHMENT I SPOKE ABOUT EARLIER.

ANOTHER FACTOR THAT HOLDS US BACK IS THE PROCESS FOR COLLECTING USER ORDER INFORMATION. IT HAS FLAWS. AS A RESULT, WE

WIND UP WITH LOST DATA, AND HAVE TO RETRACE OUR STEPS...SOMETIMES MORE THAN ONCE.

THIRD, I NOTE THE SLOW PROCESS FOR ACQUIRING NEW SERVICES. ONE OF THE REASONS WE EMBRACED NMCI WAS THE PROMISE OF INCORPORATING NEW TECHNOLOGY MORE RAPIDLY THAN WE COULD ACHIEVE WITH OUR OWN ACQUISITION PROCESS. UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE NOT YET REALIZED THIS GOAL. THE REQUIRED CONTRACT MODIFICATIONS ARE SLOW IN MATERIALIZING. IN FACT, THERE ARE OVER 200 SUCH MODIFICATIONS AWAITING RESOLUTION RIGHT NOW.

THE UPSHOT OF ALL OF THIS IS THAT IMPLEMENTATION IS MOVING TOO SLOWLY. SINCE WE BEGAN THIS PROCESS IN MARCH OF 2003, THE MARINE CORPS HAS SO FAR RECEIVED DELIVERY OF JUST OVER 9,000 SEATS...OUT OF A TOTAL REQUIREMENT OF ALMOST 89,000. AT MY OWN BASE...QUANTICO...WE'VE CUT OVER ONLY ABOUT 1,350 SEATS, OUT OF A TOTAL REQUIREMENT OF ALMOST 6,000. YOU CAN DO THE MATH YOURSELF, BUT SUFFICE TO SAY THAT, AT THE CURRENT RATE, IT WOULD TAKE FAR TOO LONG TO REACH THE OBJECTIVE. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.

BUT, TO BE CLEAR, THERE'S MORE TO THE SOLUTION THAN SIMPLY INCREASING THE SPEED OF CUTTING OVER SEATS FROM THE LEGACY SYSTEM TO NMCI. WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT IMPLEMENTATION IS ACCOMPLISHED CORRECTLY. CURRENTLY, FOR EXAMPLE, SOME OF THE APPLICATIONS WE NEED IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION ARE BEING DELAYED IN TESTING. WITHOUT THE PROPER APPLICATIONS, A USER CAN'T DO THE JOB, SO THE CUTOVER ACTUALLY RESULTS IN A LOSS OF CAPABILITY. WE NEED TO FIX THIS.

I CAN GIVE YOU MY OWN PERSONAL OPINION AS TO WHY THESE PROBLEMS ARE OCCURRING. I BELIEVE THAT E.D.S. WAS NOT PREPARED TO EXECUTE THE IMPLEMENTATION. NOW BEFORE I GET ANY "HATE E-MAIL", THE REASONS WHY E.D.S. WAS NOT PREPARED ARE MANY, AND IN SOME CASES, PERHAPS, UNDERSTANDABLE. BUT WHETHER IT WAS DUE TO NOT FULLY UNDERSTANDING THE SIZE AND SCOPE OF THE CONTRACT; WHETHER IT WAS A LACK OF QUALIFIED MANAGERS AND TECHNICIANS AT KEY SITES; WHETHER IT WAS A LACK OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT; WHETHER IT WAS SIMPLY BAD LUCK AT TIMES; OR WHETHER THESE WERE THE DYNAMICS THAT RESULTED WHEN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE

NAVY CULTURE AND E.D.S. CULTURE MERGED SO QUICKLY, THE FACTS REMAIN THAT IT HAS BEEN ROCKY AND PROBLEMATIC. AGAIN THIS MORNING, SECRETARY ENGLAND NOTED THAT THIS IS A “VERY COMPLEX PROJECT!” IT IS NOT MY PLACE—OR INTENT—TO FIX ANY BLAME. I SAID UP FRONT, I’M A USER...A CUSTOMER. MY PURPOSE HERE, TODAY, IS TO SHARE MY OBSERVATIONS, AND TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION. I UNDERSTAND CLEARLY “COMMANDERS INTENT” BUT I ALSO BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE TO TELL THE COMMANDER WHEN HIS “INTENT” ISN’T WORKING AS EXPECTED. ALSO, I BELIEVE THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION WAS UNDER-RESOURCED. AS TO WHY IT WAS UNDER-

RESOURCED, I CAN TELL YOU THAT THERE WERE MANY VARIABLES. MAYBE IT'S THE TYPICAL PHENOMENON ABOUT PROGRAMS THAT THEY SEEM TO COST MORE THAN WAS FIRST REPORTED. FOR WHATEVER REASON, COSTS SEEM TO OUTPACE OUR ABILITY TO STABILIZE PROGRAMS, NOT JUST IN NMCI, BUT IN MANY PROGRAMS. FOR THOSE CHARGED WITH MANAGING AND FUNDING THESE PROGRAMS, THE CHALLENGES ARE SIGNIFICANT. IN MY SERVICE WE ARE STRUGGLING WITH THE RESOURCING CHALLENGE AS I SPEAK. AFFORDING NMCI TO OUR ULTIMATE SEATS REQUIREMENT IS A HUGE HURDLE FOR US. TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE

THINGS MEAN THAT SEAT DELIVERIES HAVE TAKEN MUCH LONGER THAN EXPECTED.

THESE PROBLEMS, QUITE NATURALLY, CONCERN US. UNTIL THEY'RE RESOLVED, THE MARINE CORPS REMAINS UNABLE TO REAP THE EXPECTED BENEFITS OF NMCI. THIS REALLY GETS OUR ATTENTION BECAUSE WE'RE TRANSITIONING TO NMCI, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY TRANSFORMING THE CORPS *AND* FIGHTING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM. TO USE ANOTHER BUSINESS ANALOGY, CONSIDER THE IMAGE OF A FIRM THAT'S TRYING TO RETOOL ITS PRODUCTION FACILITY, WHILE CONTINUING TO ROLL PRODUCT OFF THE ASSEMBLY LINE. THIS IS OUR

CHALLENGE. EVERY DAY, I USE MY NMCI SEAT TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE MARINE CORPS LEADERSHIP IN IRAQ. THERE HAVE BEEN TOO MANY OCCASIONS WHEN MY SEAT FAILED, WITH A RESULTING ADVERSE IMPACT ON MY ABILITY TO PERFORM MY MISSION. THAT I FIND UNACCEPTABLE.

LET ME GET TO THE THIRD QUESTION I PROMISED TO ADDRESS: WHEN NMCI IS FULLY OPERATIONAL, WILL WE GARNER ALL OF THE ADDITIONAL CAPABILITY WE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE? MY ANSWER TO YOU IS A QUALIFIED "YES." THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT NMCI IS THE RIGHT WAY TO GO, AND I'M CONFIDENT THAT WE'RE GOING TO GET THERE. THE

QUALIFICATION COMES ONLY IF WE CAN FIND THE MECHANISM TO ALLOW FOR THE RAPID INSERTION OF TECHNOLOGY AND ENHANCEMENTS TO THE SYSTEM, IF WE CAN CONTINUE TO AFFORD THIS SYSTEM, AND IF WE CAN GUARANTEE DEPENDABILITY. AS SECRETARY ENGLAND SAID THIS MORNING, "WE MUST WORK OUT THE BUGS!" THERE IS, HOWEVER, MUCH TO BE HOPEFUL ABOUT. AT MY OWN COMMAND, I'VE SEEN HOW GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY, WHEN WE WORK AS A TEAM, CAN ADDRESS THE ISSUES AND ARRIVE AT SOLUTIONS.

FOR INSTANCE, CONSIDER THE ISSUE OF "SEAT CUT OVER." AT QUANTICO, WE RECOGNIZED EARLY THAT

WE HAD A PROBLEM. WE WERE SUPPOSED TO RECEIVE A DELIVERY OF 30 SEATS PER DAY, BUT AFTER THE FIRST 90 DAYS OF IMPLEMENTATION, ONLY 568 HAD BEEN DELIVERED: WOEFULLY SHORT OF THE GOAL. WE CALLED FOR A TIME-OUT TO REVIEW THE ISSUE AND CORRECT PROBLEMS. DURING A FIVE-WEEK PAUSE, BOTH THE MARINE CORPS AND E.D.S. WORKED TO CLEAN OUR COLLECTIVE HOUSE. WE FOUND THE PROBLEMS AND CORRECTED THEM. AT THE SAME TIME, WE STROVE TO ACHIEVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOALS. WE REMINDED OURSELVES THAT, ULTIMATELY, MARINES' LIVES DEPENDED UPON OUR SUCCESS, AND WE RENEWED OUR MUTUAL

COMMITMENT TO MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT. AFTER RESTARTING THE PROCESS, WE RECEIVED DELIVERY OF 448 SEATS IN THE NEXT 30 DAYS: A DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN PERFORMANCE, ACHIEVED THROUGH A COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO RECOGNIZING PROBLEMS AND TACKLING THEM HEAD-ON.

NMCI IS ONE OF THE LARGEST INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES CONTRACTS IN HISTORY. IT'S TEACHING US NEW LESSONS EVERY DAY, NOT JUST AT QUANTICO, BUT THROUGHOUT THE CORPS. IN PARTICULAR, WE'RE FINDING THAT ONE SIZE DOES NOT "FIT ALL." WE'VE LEARNED TO BE SENSITIVE TO

SITE-SPECIFIC DIFFERENCES. DUE DILIGENCE IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF EACH SITE CUT OVER, AND “UP FRONT” PLANNING IS A MUST, IN ORDER TO MAKE A PROJECT OF THIS MAGNITUDE A SUCCESS.

I’VE TALKED TODAY ABOUT FRICTION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS, AND I KNOW THAT CAN COME ACROSS AS A STRICTLY NEGATIVE MESSAGE. BUT I DON’T THINK ABOUT IT LIKE THAT, AND YOU SHOULDN’T EITHER. ONE OF THE COLONELS ON MY STAFF SAID SOMETHING TO ME THE OTHER DAY THAT I’D LIKE TO QUOTE. HE SAID, “WITHOUT FRICTION, THERE CAN BE NO TRACTION.” THAT’S A VERY INSIGHTFUL STATEMENT, AND I THINK THAT IT CAN BE

APPLIED TO ANY UNDERTAKING OF THE COMPLEXITY AND MAGNITUDE OF NMCI. IT'S NOT A PERFECT WORLD, AND THINGS RARELY GO EXACTLY AS WE EXPECT. BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL YOU THAT NOBODY UNDERSTANDS THIS BETTER THAN MARINES, BECAUSE IN COMBAT, FRICTION IS UBIQUITOUS. WE STUDY IT...WE EXPECT IT...WE KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH IT. CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL—FRICTION, FOG OF WAR, MURPHY'S LAW! FOR MARINES, THE ABILITY TO TURN FRICTION TO OUR ADVANTAGE HAS BEEN RAISED TO A HIGH ART FORM. THAT'S WHAT MY GOOD COLONEL WAS SAYING, AND THAT'S HOW WE ALL NEED TO THINK ABOUT OUR APPROACH TO THIS TASK.

AND THAT'S REALLY WHAT MY MESSAGE TO YOU TODAY IS ALL ABOUT. THE MARINE CORPS IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE SUCCESS OF NMCI. IN FACT, WE'RE COUNTING ON IT AS A CRITICAL ENABLER—FOUNDATION IF YOU WILL--OF OUR PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION. NMCI IMPLEMENTATION IS A HUGE JOB, AND IT'S GOING TO PRESENT US WITH CHALLENGES. AS I SAID EARLIER, SECRETARY ENGLAND SET THE BAR HIGH AND CHALLENGED US TO MEET AND EXCEED IT. WE UNDERSTAND THE MISSION AND END STATE. I BELIEVE—AND I'M HOPEFUL—THAT THE ALLIANCE OF GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY THAT ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH FOR

THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS IN THE PAST CAN OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLE IN OUR PATH. NMCI, IN TANDEM WITH OUR JOINT C4ISR INITIATIVES, WILL GIVE THE NAVAL SERVICES AND THE JOINT FORCE AN OVERWHELMING ADVANTAGE IN A WORLD WHERE INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE, AND DECISION SUPREMACY IS A MUST. LET ME ALSO NOTE SOMETHING THAT HAS ABSOLUTELY IMPRESSED ME: WHEN I MEET AND TALK WITH NMCI/EDS EMPLOYEES AT QUANTICO, I SEE CONCERNED, PROFESSIONAL, AND DEDICATED FELLOW CITIZENS. I DON'T WANT ANYTHING I'VE SAID TODAY TO DETRACT IN ANY WAY FROM THOSE FINE PEOPLE AND THEIR EFFORTS. I

HAVE THANKED THEM PRIVATELY AND I WANT TO
THANK THEM AGAIN HERE, IN PUBLIC.

I WOULD ASK EACH OF YOU, AS MEMBERS OF THE
NMCI TEAM, TO REAFFIRM YOUR OWN COMMITMENT
TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS PROMISING PROGRAM. WE
ARE NOT “THERE” YET—BUT WE REALLY HAVE NO
CHOICE BUT TO GET “THERE”. LIKE CAESAR, WE HAVE
CROSSED THE RUBICON AND NOW WE NEED TO GET
TO THE FINAL OBJECTIVE. THAT OBJECTIVE IS A
STATE-OF-THE-ART, DEPENDABLE, AFFORDABLE,
ADAPTABLE, NAVY MARINE CORPS INTERNET. WHEN
YOU WATCH THE EVENING NEWS, AND YOU SEE THE
FACES OF THOSE YOUNG MARINES AND SAILORS

WHO ARE DEPLOYED TO THE MANY TROUBLE SPOTS
OF THE WORLD, ENGAGED IN COMBAT, REMEMBER
HOW MUCH IS RIDING ON NMCI. AS LONG AS WE
KEEP THAT IN MIND, WE'LL REACH THE FINAL
OBJECTIVE.

THANK YOU, AND SEMPER FIDELIS.